

BIOGRAPHY OF A HACILAR FIGURINE

Emily Sykes

I700547

Assessment 3 – HPAH7016

WHAT I HAVE PREVIOUSLY SAID

- Hacilar Figurine, accessed via *LiveAuctioneers*.
- Assessment 1: Voigt 2007 'The Splendour of Women: Late Neolithic Images from Central Anatolia'.
 - Detailed analysis
 - Great discussion of context of Hacilar figurine excavation notes
- Assessment 2: Symbolic Communication; Ethnographic Comparisons
 - Wearing, painting and posture to discuss communication.
 - Compared to examples of body modification and symbolic gesture in other cultures, regions and time periods (**Bolger 1992; Qasim 2013; Akesson, et al. 2019**).



Hacilar style pottery female fertility figure. Front Image. From Live Auctioneers. https://www.liveauctioneers.com/en-gb/item/8583810_421-hacilar-style-pottery-female-fertility-figure.

WHAT I INTEND TO SAY

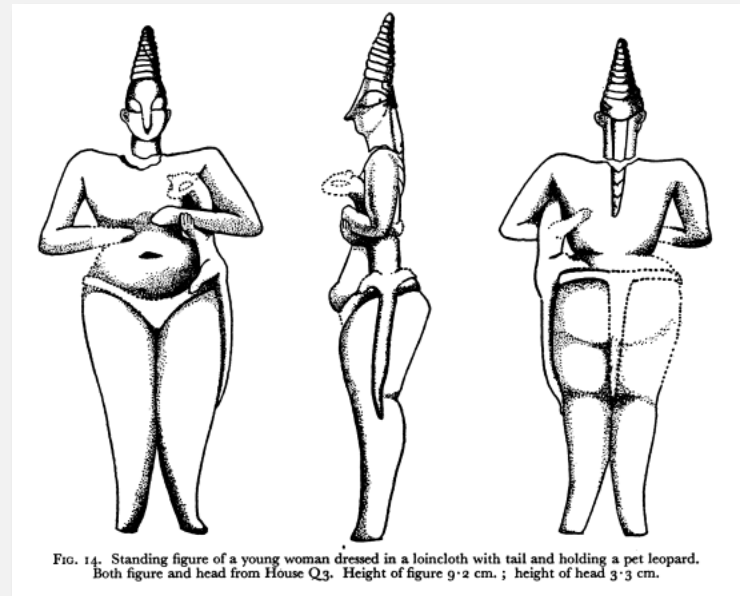
- Go through the life of the figurine in chronological order
 - *Creation*
 - *Where is it today?*
 - *What signifies it has reached the end of its life?*
- What context was the figurine used in?
 - *What do I think its use was?*
- Didactic context for girls and women of the time

WHO I AM USING FOR THE THEORY THING

- **Kopytoff 1986, p. 66:** ‘What, sociologically, are the biographical possibilities inherent in its “status” and in the period and culture, and how are these possibilities realized?’
- Who made it? Where was it created? Who would have used it? How would they have used it?
- Are there any recognisable ‘periods’/‘ages’ for the object’s life, and how are they recognised?
- Does the object’s use change over time? What happens at the end of its life?

HOW WAS THIS FIGURINE CREATED?

- Where?
 - Neolithic/Chalcolithic Hacilar – references to both periods in multiple works (Voigt 2007; Mellaart 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961) - Anatolia
- How?
 - Material: clay – easily found in area (Maniatis and Tite 1981) – ‘finely modelled’ (Mellaart 1961, p. 47).
 - Holding of the doll in its creation could have been similar to how it was held during its use?
 - Both baked and unbaked, approx. 20 practically complete figurines, 35 restorable condition
 - 22 heads, 5 could not be fitted to bodies, ‘at least another twenty-five [bodies] are represented by arms, legs or part of the torso’ (Mellaart 1961, p. 47).



Standing figurine holding ‘pet leopard’. Drawing found in excavation report. Mellaart 1961, p. 54.

THE CREATOR

- Who made it?
 - Men typically seen as creators of cultures of ancient worlds
 - 'the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively' (**Oxford Languages**)
 - Means men were leading creation of art? (**Blundell 1995, p. 12; Slatkin 2019, p. xxvi**)
- Why not women?
 - Naturalistic aspects, knows what a woman's body truly looked like
 - Many different postures, positions, and shapes/sizes (**Mellaart 1961, p. 47-61**)
 - Suggestion women were nude in the summer? That's why woman's body is known? (**Mellaart 1961, p. 49**).
 - Does not acknowledge that a woman could have made this however

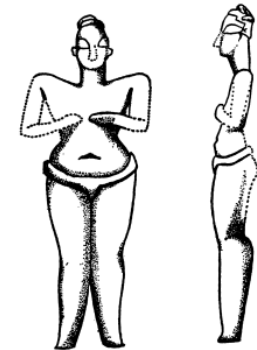


FIG. 10. Slender figure of a girl, dressed in briefs. House Q5. Height 11.7 cm.

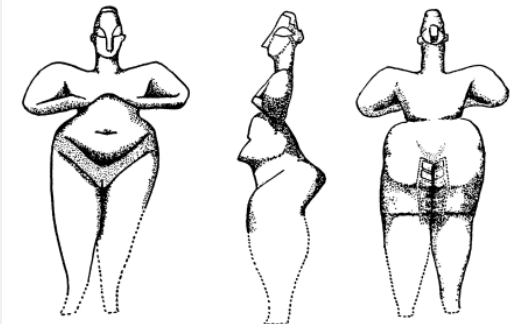


FIG. 11. Standing figure of mature woman, wearing an apron at the back. House Q5. Height 10.2 cm. without feet.

Standing figurines: top is 'slender' girl; bottom is a 'mature woman'.
Drawing found excavation report. Mellaart 1961, p. 52.

WHAT WAS THE FIGURINE'S USE?

- Who would have used it? How would they have used it?

‘Finally its religious and most important aspect of all should not be forgotten: these statues offer primary evidence for the religion of the period in which the predominance of a goddess is as marked as the relative insignificance of the male. The circumstances of discovery further suggest a domestic cult, for none of the houses can be singled out as possessing such features as might warrant the designation of “shrine” or “temple”.’
(Mellaart 1961, p. 49)

- Lack of evidence – Akrotiri mainly women in wall paintings **(Debbo 2000, p. 1)**
 - *Not all goddesses or representations of one*
- Possibly to teach girls and women about important milestones in their lives and how their bodies change as they grow?
- Held by legs – lots of wearing here, held and studied, maybe even talked to? Like modern day children and dolls and toys? **(Sibonney 2019)**



Saffron gatherers detail Thera Santorini. Xeste 3.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saffron_gatherers_detail_Thera_Santorini.png.

PERIODS FOR THE LIFE OF THE FIGURINE

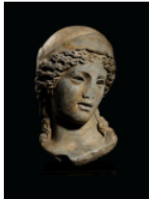
- Creation
- Starts to be used
 - *Legs worn down*
- Burial
 - *Intentional breakage before burial?*
 - *6,000 years underground before excavation*
- 1957: Mellaart's excavation began
- 2011: Online auction, bought by private collector
- End of life?
 - When it was buried? No longer continuing its “original” use
 - However, still being used, life has continued despite it being a different one



Hacilar style pottery female fertility figure. Image of Worn Down Legs. From Live Auctioneers.
https://www.liveauctioneers.com/en-gb/item/8583810_421-hacilar-style-pottery-female-fertility-figure.

CONTEXT OF FIGURINE OVER TIME

- Use 1: Used by people of Hacilar, maybe by women and girls in didactic context
- Use 2: On display in someone's private collection

	LOT 80 PROPERTY FROM THE BERGSTEN COLLECTION A ROMAN MARBLE TERMINAL FIGURE OF DIONYSUS CIRCA 2ND CENTURY A.D. A ROMAN MARBLE TERMINAL FIGURE OF DIONYSUS, CIRCA 2ND CENTURY A.D., 59 1/2 in. (151 cm.) high Estimate GBP 700,000-GBP 1,000,000	Price Realised GBP 862,500
	LOT 89 A MONUMENTAL ROMAN GREY MARBLE HEAD OF MINERVA CIRCA LATE 2ND CENTURY A.D. A MONUMENTAL ROMAN GREY MARBLE HEAD OF MINERVA, CIRCA LATE 2ND CENTURY A.D., 25 1/2 in. (65 cm.) high Estimate GBP 500,000-GBP 800,000	Price Realised GBP 622,500
	LOT 84 PROPERTY OF A LADY A ROMAN MARBLE VENUS CIRCA 1ST-2ND CENTURY A.D. A ROMAN MARBLE VENUS, CIRCA 1ST-2ND CENTURY A.D., 50 in. (127 cm.) high Estimate GBP 250,000-GBP 350,000	Price Realised GBP 550,000

Winning bids for three ancient artefacts, in order from top to bottom: Roman Marble Terminal Figure of Dionysus £862,500; Monumental Roman Grey Marble Head of Minerva £622,500; Roman Marble Venus £550,000. Christie's Antiquities Auction 16th December 2020.

<https://www.christies.com/en/auction/antiquities-28619/browse-lots?intsaleid=28619&lid=1>.

CONCLUSION

- ‘What, sociologically, are the biographical possibilities inherent in its “status”’
 - *High status for those who use it, maybe not in a societal perspective?*
- ‘and in the period and culture,’
 - *Important milestones for women during this time were dangerous*
 - *Knowing what was to be expected and having something to “talk” to about worries etc would have been useful in ways*
- ‘and how are these possibilities realized?’
 - *Analysing figurine and looking at aspects of it can lead to possibilities and suggestions being made*
 - *Ethnographic comparisons*

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IMAGE REFERENCES

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